

* Implicite fides, is whē a man without instruction in hymselfe groundeth only upon the fayth of the Church, not able to reason for or of that which he believeth. Ann. 1555. Februa. 17.

to I am professed. Yet do I bind my selfe as by my humble simplicity, so by my fadym* implicite: that is, by faith in generality (as they call it) to wisd my believe in the credit of the same, that no authority that cometh religion repugnant thereunto, shall by any means remove me from the same, though it may hap that our adversaries will labour to beguile vs with enticing wordes, and seeke to spoyle vs through Philosophy and deceitfull vanity after the traditions of men, and after the ordinances of the world, and not after Christ, &c. And thus much out of M. Saunders letter, so much as remained thereof. The residue, because it was rent away, I cannot not adioine hereunto. For without saying by this already expressed, it is sufficient to understand how good was y^e cause & estate of this blessed child of God, being prisoner for Christs cause. For y^e defence wherof he wholly bestowed & resigned himself in such sort as he forbad his wife to sue for his delivry, & wh^o other of his friends had by suite almost obtained it, he discouraged them, so that they did not follow their suite, as by this letter following may appear.

¶ A letter of M. Saunders to his wife.

Grace, mercy, and peace in Iesus Christ our Lord.

Entirely beloved wife, even as vnto mine owne soule and body, so do I dayly in my hartie prayer with vnto you; for I doo dayly, twise at the least in this fort remember you. And I do not doubt (deare wife) but that both I and you, as we be written in the booke of life, so we shall together enjoy the fame euertlastingly, through the grace and mercy of God our deare father, in hys sonne our Christ. And for this present life, let vs wholly appoint our selues to the will of our good God, to glorifie him either by life or by death, and euen that same mercifull Lord make vs worthy to honour him either way as pleaseth him. Amen. I am merry, I thank my God and my Christ, in whome and through whome I shall (I knowe) be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crowne which is layd vp in store for me, and all the true Soldiours of Christ. Wherefore wifely, let vs in the name of our God, fight lustily to ouercome the flesh, the deuil and the world. What our harnesse and weapons be in this kind of fight, looke the s. vnto the Ephesiens, and pray, pray, pray. I would that you make no suite for me in any wifely. Thanke you knowe whome, for her most sweete and comfortable putting me in remembrance of my iourney wherther I am passing. God send vs all good speede, and a ioyfull meeting. I haue now fewe sicke friends to further me in that iourney, which is in dede the greatest friendship. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

A prisoner in the Lord Laurence Saunders.

Whis his constance is sufficiently commended and declared by his valiant buckling with two mighty enemies, Antichrist and death. The neither of the did he give place; but by suffering their malice, got y^e victory ouer them both. One of the conflicts which he had with Antichrist & hys members, I haue gathered out of a letter of his own hand writing. It was with Doctor Weston, a man, whome though I thought praye, yet would all good and goodly me thoughtly dispraise. Whis the said Laurence Saunders thus writeth in a letter which he sent to one of his freinds, which wrote to him to knowe what Doct. Weston dyd at the Marshhalles; wherunto he thus answered.

Wherunto came to confesse with M. Weston. May he hath concluded with him, I knowe not; I wish it may be to Gods glory. Amen. Amen. Whis Weston of his gentlenes distrease, & desired me frendship in his worldly wyse sort. As I had not so much good manner, as to take it at his hand; for I said, that I was well enough, and ready therewith to abide the extremity, to keepe there by a good conscience. You be a sleeper in sin (said he). I would awake (quoth I) and do not forget Vigilate & orate. I Watch & pray. What church was there, said he? yeres past; what church was there, quoth I, in Belias time? I haue of Isent, sayd he, was of yours Church, so, quoth I, we did cōdemne her as an hereticke. Who was of your Church, sayd he? yeres past? Such (quoth I) as that I comly Antichrist, and his cabble haue reputed and condemned as hereticke, wicked, sayd he, Thope, Dicastie, &c. Yea, quoth I, with many more, as theyes do tell.

The W of Isome hath, sayd he, long tyme played a part in your taping sermons; but now be ye sure he must play another manner of part. The more pite, quoth I; and yet some cōfort it is to see how that the best learned, wisest, & holiest of you all, haue heretofore had him to play a part likewise in your sermons & writings, though now to please the world, you do tume with the wacherocke. Did you euer sayd he, you me preach against the Bishop of Isome? So (quoth I) for I never heard you preach. But I trowe you haue ben no wiser than other, &c. with more about the Sacrament, pray, pray. God keepe your family & blessed it. What a blessed taste this good man had of Gods holy

spirit, by diuers and sondy his letters may right well appeare to him that is disposed to perseue the same: wherof certayne we haue here thought good, the Lord willing, to expresse, first beginning with that which he wrote out of the Marshhalles to D. Crammer, Ridley, and Latimer, prisoners for the like cause of Christ in Isome.

To the Archbishop Crammer, Bish. Ridley, and M. Latimer, being prisoner in Oxford.

In my most humble wife I salute you most reuerend fathers in Christ. Iesus our Lord, Immoortal thanks and euertlasting prayes be geuen vnto that father of mercies, Whiche hath made vs meete to be partakers of the inheritance of Saintes in light, which hath deliuered vs from the power of darkenes, and hath translated vs into the kingdom of his beloved Sonne, by whome we haue redemption through his blood. &c. And most happy estate, that in an vnspicable our life is bid with Christ in God. But wherof Christ which is our life shall sayd himselfe, then shall we all appeare with him in glory. In y^e meane season as our light is but in a glasse, euen in a darcke speaking; so we walke in sayth, not after outward appearance, the which sayth although for want of outward appearance, reason reputed but as vaine, yea the chosen of God do knowe the effect thereof, to bring a more substantiall taste and lively fruition of very delicate and perfect blessedness, than reason can reach of; hence reuere. By this sayth we haue in our profession all good things, yea euen them which the eye hath not seene, and the eare hath not heard, neither hath entered the hart of man. &c. Then if hereby we doe enjoy all good things, it followeth that we must merdes possesse, haue and enioy you most reuerend fathers, who be no small part of our ioy and good things geuen vs of God.

We heretofore haue had the fruition of you by bodily presence to our inexpressible benefite, prayd be that our gracious God therof. And now in spirit we haue the experience of vnspicable confort, by your reuerend fathers wordes for y^e in this so glorious soire, ye become a totone light vpon a hill, a candle vpon a candlestick, a spectacle vnto y^e world both to the Angells & vnto vs. So y^e, as we to our great comfort do seele, you also may assuredly say with saint Paul, y^e things which happen vnto vs, do chance vnto y^e great furtherance of the Gospell, so y^e our bands in Christ are manifest, not onely throughout all the indgement hall, but in all wholl Europa, in so much that many of the heathen in the Lord, being incouraged through our bondes, dare more boldly speake the word without feare. And here in as you haue with I. Paul greatly to reioyce, so we do reioyce with you, and we do in deed with you geue thanks for this worthy excellent fauour of our God, towards you, that Christ is thus magnified in you, yea and hereafter that he magnified in your bodies, whether it be through life or death. Of which thing truly we are assured in our prayers for you, and muniting of the spirit. And although for your owne partes Christ is vnto you life, and death advantage, and that your desire is (as in dede it were better for you) to be tolde, and to be w^o Christ; yet for the Church of Christ were it much more necessary, that ye. should abide in the flesh. Yea that mercifull God, euen for his Christs sake grant that ye may abide and continue to the furtherance of the Church and reioying of sayth, that the reioying therof may be the more abundant through Iesus Christ by your resting, Amen, Amen.

But if it seeme better otherwifely vnto the diuine will-dome y^e by frey death he hath appointed you to glorifie him, y^e Lords will be done. Yea euen as we do reioyce both on your behalfes, as also on our owne, that God is magnified by life, and should be more abundantly glad for the continuance thereof; so we shall not lelle reioyce to haue y^e same brought by death. For shall geue thanks for this honour geuen vnto you, reioying that ye are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ, and that is geuen to you of God, not onely that ye should beleue in him, but also that ye should suffer for his sake. And herein we shall haue to reioyce in the behalfe of the Church of Christ, whose faith may be the faster fixed vpon Gods vertice, being confirmed with this such worthy benefites. Whi shalke be to God for this his vnspicable gift.

And now most reuerend fathers, that you may understand the treuth of vs and our estate howe we stand in the loib; I do assure your conuerences, partly by y^e p^recurre by such of our brethren as be here in bondes to me, partly by that I heare of them which be in other places, & partly by that I inwardly experience which I most vnworthy wretch haue of Gods good comfort (more abundance wherof I knowe there is in others) you may be assured (I say) by Gods grace, that you shall not be frustrate of your hope of

What a blessed taste of M. Saunders had of Christes comforts

M. Saunders written to D. Crammer, Ridley, & Colosse, Colosse, 1.

Colosse, 1. Cor. 134

Elay, 1. Cor. 2.

Math. 5.

1. Cor. 4. Phil. 1.

Phil. 1. Phil. 2.

1. Tim. 4.

M. Saunders would haue no suite made for him.

Antichrist and death two enemies.

This Doct. Weston and M. Gri. moald dyed both about the Coronation of Q. Elizabeth.

The church goeth not always by number.

Wincheffers booke De vena Obscena.